Remarks

In view of the following discussion, the applicants submit that the claims now pending in the application are neither anticipated under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 102, or obvious under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 103. Thus, the applicants believe that all of these claims are in allowable form.

REJECTIONS

A. 35 U. S. C. 102

1. Claim 1 is not anticipated by Kimura et al.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Kimura et al. (Japanese Patent Application 2003-157773 published May 30, 2003). The present application was filed in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on February 19, 2004 claiming priority to French Patent Application 0312163 filed on February 21, 2003. Since, French Priority Application 0312163, which the present application claims priority upon, was filed before the publication date of Kimura et al., Kimura et al. is not a prior reference as required by 35 U. S. C. § 102(a). As such, the applicant respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Additionally, Applicant's have ordered a certified English translation of the priority document, which will be forwarded to the Examiner's attention when received.

2. Claims 1-3 and 6 are not anticipated by Kunii et al.

Claims 1-3 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kunii et al. (U. S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0047519 A1 published April 25, 2002). The applicants submit that these claims are not anticipated by this reference.

Claim 1 is directed to a plasma panel (*see*, specification at page 1, line 5). The plasma panel comprises two plates, having a sealed space therebetween, that is filled with discharge gas and is divided into discharge cells distributed in rows and columns (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 12-18). The discharge cells are bounded between these plates by barrier ribs forming an array (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 7-8). The barrier rib portion that separates any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 7, lines 2-8). The cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 3, lines 28-29).

Kunii et al. describes a plasma display panel (*see*, Kunii et al. at page 1, paragraph 0002). The plasma display panel 1 includes a partition 29 (*see*, Kunii et al. at FIG. 1 and page 2, paragraphs 0022-0024). The partition 29 includes vertical walls 291 and horizontal walls 292 (*see*, Kunii et al. at FIG. 1 and page 2, paragraph 0024). The height of the horizontal walls 292 is lower than the height of the vertical walls (*see*, Kunii et al. at FIG. 1 and page 2, paragraph 0024).

Kunii et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Rather, Kunii et al. teaches a completely different arrangement in which a partition includes vertical

walls and horizontal walls where **the height of the horizontal walls is lower than the height of the vertical walls**. Since Kunii et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**, claim 1 is patentable over Kunii et al.

Claims 2-3 and 6 depend directly from claim 1. For the same reasons as stated above for claim 1, claims 2-3 and 6 are also patentable over Kunii et al.

3. Claim 1 is not anticipated by Kao et al.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kao et al. (U. S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0214236 A1 published November 20, 2003). The applicants submit that this claim is not anticipated by this reference.

Claim 1 is directed to a plasma panel (*see*, specification at page 1, line 5). The plasma panel comprises two plates, having a sealed space therebetween, that is filled with discharge gas and is divided into discharge cells distributed in rows and columns (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 12-18). The discharge cells are bounded between these plates by barrier ribs forming an array (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 7-8). The barrier rib portion that separates any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 7, lines 2-8). The cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 3, lines 28-29).

Kao et al. describes a plasma display panel (*see*, Kao et al. at page 1, paragraph 0001). The plasma display panel includes horizontal barrier ribs 40

with narrow vertical sections 34b (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0041). Space pad strips 50 are arranged in parallel only over the horizontal barrier ribs 40 providing a height difference between the narrow sections 34b and a front plate 32 (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0046-0047).

Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Rather, Kao et al. teaches a completely different arrangement in which space pads are arranged in parallel only over horizontal barrier ribs with narrow vertical sections providing **a height difference between the narrow sections and a front plate**. Since Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**, claim 1 is patentable over Kao et al.

B. 35 U. S. C. § 103

1. Claim 4 is not obvious over Kao et al.

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kao et al. (U. S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0214236 A1 published November 20, 2003). The applicants submit that this claim is not rendered obvious by this reference.

Claim 4 depends directly from claim 1 which is directed to a plasma panel (*see*, specification at page 1, line 5). The plasma panel comprises two plates, having a sealed space therebetween, that is filled with discharge gas and is divided into discharge cells distributed in rows and columns (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 12-18). The discharge cells are bounded between these plates by barrier ribs forming an array (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 7-8). The barrier rib portion that separates any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 7, lines 2-8). The cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 3, lines 28-29).

Kao et al. describes a plasma display panel (*see*, Kao et al. at page 1, paragraph 0001). The plasma display panel includes horizontal barrier ribs 40 with narrow vertical sections 34b (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0041). Space pad strips 50 are arranged in parallel only over the horizontal barrier ribs 40 providing a height difference between the narrow sections 34b and a front plate 32 (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0046-0047).

Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Rather, Kao et al. teaches a completely different arrangement in which space pads are arranged in parallel only over horizontal barrier ribs with narrow vertical sections providing **a height difference between the narrow sections and a front plate**. Since Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion

separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**, claim 4 is patentable over Kao et al.

2. Claim 5 is not obvious over Kao et al. in view of Bettinelli et al.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Kao et al. (U. S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0214236 A1 published November 20, 2003) in view of Bettinelli et al. (WO 02/05602 published July 4, 2002). The applicants submit that this claim is not rendered obvious by the combination of these references.

Claim 5 depends from claim 1 and is directed to a plasma panel (*see*, specification at page 1, line 5). The plasma panel comprises two plates, having a sealed space therebetween, that is filled with discharge gas and is divided into discharge cells distributed in rows and columns (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 12-18). The discharge cells are bounded between these plates by barrier ribs forming an array (*see*, specification at page 1, lines 7-8). The barrier rib portion that separates any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 7, lines 2-8). The cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs (*see*, FIGS. 5-6 and the specification at page 3, lines 28-29).

Kao et al. describes a plasma display panel (*see*, Kao et al. at page 1, paragraph 0001). The plasma display panel includes horizontal barrier ribs 40 with narrow vertical sections 34b (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0041). Space pad strips 50 are arranged in parallel only over the horizontal barrier ribs 40 providing a height difference between the narrow

sections 34b and a front plate 32 (*see*, Kao et al. at FIG. 5 and page 4, paragraphs 0046-0047).

Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Rather, Kao et al. teaches a completely different arrangement in which space pads are arranged in parallel only over horizontal barrier ribs with narrow vertical sections providing **a height difference between the narrow sections and a front plate**. Since Kao et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**, claim 5 is patentable over Kao et al.

Bettinelli et al. describes a process for manufacturing barriers intended to separate discharge cells of a plasma display panel (*see*, Bettinelli et al. at page 1, lines 5-8).

Bettinelli et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Rather, Bettinelli et al. only teaches a method of manufacturing barriers for a plasma display panel. Since Bettinelli et al. does not describe or suggest a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where

the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**, claim 5 is patentable over Bettinelli et al.

Furthermore, since Kao et al. teaches a completely different arrangement in which space pads are arranged in parallel only over horizontal barrier ribs with narrow vertical sections providing a **height difference between the narrow sections and a front plate**, and Bettinelli et al. only teaches a method of manufacturing barriers for a plasma display panel, the combination of these references does not describe or suggest applicant's arrangement recited in claim 5. In particular, claim 5 describes a plasma panel having discharge cells that are bounded by barrier ribs forming an array where the barrier rib portion separating any two adjacent cells of the same column includes a cavity in the thickness of the rib as well as a notch that brings the two adjacent cells in contact with each other through the cavity, **wherein the cavity has sidewalls that extend so as to be level with the top of the ribs**. Thus, claim 5 is patentable over the combination of these references.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the applicants submit that none of the claims presently in the application are anticipated under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 102, or obvious under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 103. Consequently, the applicants believe that all of the claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring adverse final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Ms. Patricia A. Verlangieri, at (609)

734-6867, so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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